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SOUTH SEA SKETCHES

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SOUTH SEA SKETCHES

by

B. A. ERDLAND

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Preface

BUT for the Great World War our American public would take as little interest in the South Sea Islands as in the troglodytes of dark continents. However, since Japan received a mandate over the former German colonies situated to the north of the equator, since Australia drew the Bismark archipelago into its sphere of influence, since Great Britain reserved the multi-million phosphate fields of Nauru for its exploitation, and since our own government decided to retain the Philippine Islands under its benevolent sway, the area of the Pacific has come into the limelight. Thus it was thought opportune to pen a few random sketches on the Marshall Islands and New Britain where the writer spent ten laborious years.

May the kind reader enjoy these unpretentious touches, bask in the tropical sun and slumber in the shade of the virgin forest, smile and shudder, laugh and weep, believe in the nominal calm of the Pacific or dread future hurricanes. Recollections are sweet.

THE AUTHOR.

Contents

Chapter		Page
	Preface	
I	A Glance at the Islands	1
II	Native Food	6
III	Beauty and Ugliness	12
IV	Characteristics	17
V	Social Strata	23
VI	Woman and Youth	28
VII	Religion	33
VIII	Superstition	37
IX	Figurative Language	41
X	Proverbs	47
XI	Lost at Sea	52
XII	On Ruins	58
XIII	Commerce	62
XIV	New Britain	68
XV	The Cannibal	73
XVI	Marriage	78
XVII	Warfare and Murder	82
XVIII	Slavery	88
XIX	Cannibalism	92
XX	A Tragic Massacre	99

CHAPTER I

A Glance at the Islands

THE coral islands of the Marshall group appear to the approaching traveler as oases in an ocean desert: ridiculously low to resist the pulsing waves and wonderfully bold in separating a portion of the sea from its wide expanse. Rarely do the slightly elevated tracts of chain-like islets exceed a quarter of a mile in width; in spots they even narrow down to a few yards and let the open seas sweep across their necks into the lagoon.

Fortunately abreast the entire stretch of island the outer table reef, some four hundred yards wide, acts the part of a land-sheltering bulwark. At high tide billow after billow, rolling in as though bent on destruction, strikes the edge of the barrier, tumbles over it, and breaks with a mighty roar. Each wave, foam-crested and booming deeply, hisses out its life to the grating music of moving stones and

sand, and swishes back in undertow to make room for another.

The lagoon is smooth unless high winds whip it into raging turmoil. Smoothness also prevails in the passage to and from the lagoon, although the swift vortical current, developed therein by the entering and receding flood-tide, endangers every seafaring craft.

The soil of the islets is productive on the lagoon side only; near the ocean occasional tidal-waves and hurricanes have accumulated deep layers of coral stones. Wells and springs failing, men and animals depend on rain-water. It is collected by the natives from tree forks and thatched roofs into cocoanut shells and pails, and by the white men from galvanized roofs into tanks and cisterns. A wondrous paradise for strictest prohibition, were the foreign settlers not tempted by imported Australian wines, Bavarian beer, and French or Dutch liquor, all containing more than one half of one percent of alcohol.

Pulverized corals and rotted leaves, which compose the original soil, preclude true fertility. Whoever wishes to raise radishes,

cucumbers, pumpkins, and beans must needs import black humus from other archipelagoes. Only various kinds of shrubs and fruit-trees thrive in the lean native soil.

The cocoanut-palm spreads its tapering and twisted roots in every direction and vigorously clasps coral stones to anchor the trunk against storms. Its main vegetative strength is derived from the brackish water which percolates through the porous corals and reaches the roots from beneath at the rising tide. Thus invigorated the young palm grows rapidly until its handful of leaves rocks proudly on the bare stem. From this dominant height it looks disdainfully on its two companions: the broad-leaved breadfruit-tree and the stilted pandanus. Their growth is assured by frequent, nay, almost nightly rains which impart to the average temperature of 87 F. an extraordinary amount of dampness.

Vegetarians fare best. Beefsteak and dainties are expensive. Every one, however, may feast eyes and soul on the gratuitous beauties of nature, not on a land destitute of rippling rivulets and mountains and hills and flower-

decked vales, but on a sea illumined by the beacons of day and of night.

On a bright day, indeed, the lagoon glitters with a vivid sheen and the green islands seem to rise out of its sparkling bed. Crystalline rays of light, flashing into the heart of the lagoon, fling open to the spell-bound eye the coral garden on the bottom and disclose a thousand fishes of gorgeous coloring. Still more magical are the ruby and amethyst effects of the sunbeams in the swelling and heaving surf. Beyond it, in the far distance, the horizon, unobscured by mist or haze, sharply cuts the boundless ocean.

And how wondrous are the evenings! At six o'clock the sun sinks blood-red beneath the billows, throwing the clouds during the short twilight into baffling opalescence. Every layer and every edge of cloud is effulgent in varying tints. Finally, when the play of colors, picturesque and impressive, has run the gamut of the spectrum and darkness covers the earth, the wondrous picture hangs long before one's mind. Then, awakening from the dream, one turns toward the sky. There the myriads of

stars twinkle out of the dark blue and seemingly infinite canopy. In solemn stillness they move westward, their pale light playing on gently dimpling waves and peacefully rustling palms, whilst the muffled roar of the surf enhances the overwhelming impression of the star-lit dome.

CHAPTER II

Native Food

POETIC scenery, satiating perhaps to the white settler's taste and imagination, never satisfies a native. He longs for cocoanut, breadfruit, pandanus, taro, arrow-root, and fish. His simple bill of fare leaves variety to the cook's ingenious talent of combination.

Palatable eatables and drinks? Most certainly. The sweet liquid of a young cocoanut is sheer ambrosia, and its soft meat is heavenly food as long as it can be detached from the shell by one turn of the long-nailed thumb. Oil-dripping and tender, it surpasses the meat of a ripe nut grated on a dented shell or sharpened piece of iron and added to breadfruit, taro, and arrow-root.

What could be more delicate than a warm breadfruit baked on hot ashes or in a leaf-covered fireplace? What more savory than a

A Lagoon Bay — Marshall Islands

'jack-fruit' with a dash of cocoanut milk? In comparison with them the potato-like taro tastes insipid and the cooked arrow-root meal stale, a mere tonic for children.

Pandanus offers a delicious desert. One cone after another is broken off and squeezed with considerable exertion of teeth and jaw. By elderly people, toothless and weak, the juice is extracted from boiled cones. The mass gained from softened pandanus may be dried in the sun and preserved for the 'winter months' when the trade winds render fishing unproductive and fresh food scarce.

For the same purpose of 'winter' preservation the breadfruit is sliced, soaked for three days in salt-water, mashed, kneaded, and packed in baskets. Eight days later it is again kneaded and buried in a hole, the sides of which are set off with huge leaves. But oh — when the pit is opened to withdraw the family's weekly supply, so terrific an odor exhales from it as to make the smell of Limburger cheese seem mild and cologne-like. Happily, in its mixture with arrow-root the preserve loses to a degree its disgusting stench. Yet, there re-

mains more than the mere suspicion of it, and upon swallowing a piece one certainly looks for a draught of fresh cocoanut water.

Fish forms the real staple food of the natives. It is caught in a hundred clever ways: with shell or steel hook; in nets, baskets, and fetchers; with unbaited hooks dragged in the wake of a sailing canoe or dancing on the surface of the sea; at the edge of the reef and in the midst of the lagoon where the pure and transparent water permits distinct visibility to a depth of sixty feet.

In the mind of the native there is no greater exciting and even festive game than the catch of the bonito. As soon as a school is sighted two canoes surround it with common cocoanut twine and pull the line to the seashore, while from several canoes in the rear men dive here and there. The school — incredible as it sounds — never plunges under the floating line to escape, but slavishly follows the circuit. On the table reef the shoal is left unmolested till the tide has ebbed to a depth of one foot. At the signal given by a high person all men, in a wild scramble, spear their roped victims until

the sea is literally purpled with blood. One does not know, especially when heated natives stab their neighbors' foot or calf, where to locate the climax of confusion and agitation — in the splashing waves or the dodging bonitos or the spearing men. In this instance calm returns to men and billows at the very moment the hitherto barred women and girls invade the crimson waters and take the struggling booty from the blades of their respective relatives. The spoil usually provides every family with fish for a week or two.

Individual enjoyment rewards the fisherman who dives near the outer reef in the company of a live parrot fish held on a short line. Its effort to discard the painful hook attracts the attention of liberty-crazed brethren in the neighborhood, and while they surround the prisoner and engage in a fraticidal battle the near-by diver spears a dozen of them in a minute.

The flare of the torchlight in a nightly sailing canoe causes thousands of flying fishes to wing their flight into nets held in the rear of the light.

Old fishermen, distrustful of their bait, resort to the power of magic and invite their stubborn and reluctant prey to hook and canoe in the most humorous and charming language: "Come and board my canoe; protect thyself from the rays of the sun under the soft mat which a pretty maid has sent thee from the shore!" "See here, I have found food for myself, whereas thou circlest around thine. Just grasp the maiden's hand (the hook) and shake that little stick. I am mad at thee. He knows that he shall not drop into the canoe nor hurt himself. There he swings toward me!"

Every fish is baked in its scales on hot ashes. Its inner and outer dressing proceeds with the appetite of the dining person.

Foreigners need cautioning against various kinds of poisonous fish. Their venom rests not on the superstition and vain fear of antiquated cranks, but is real, since actual poisoning with contraction of the throat, cramps and delirium grips foolish youths who disregard the solemn warning of their elders.

You may purchase hundreds of tasty fish from the native; his remains the most delicately

flavored dainty — the cocoanut crab. He relishes not so much the meat of its enormous pincers as the butter contained in its large abdomen. Well, epicurean let him be on this single luxury of his bill of fare.

CHAPTER III

Beauty and Ugliness

IN FORMER years man's fibre dress competed advantageously in volume and airiness with the hoop-skirt of white femininity and the modern side slit had its superior in the pair of anterior and posterior mats which cloaked woman's body from hips to ankles. Fresh air and cocoanut oil shielded her bust either charmingly or uncharmingly according to age and build. Not a trace of the famous "bateau" neckline.

At the introduction of western civilization men adopted the foreign settler's garb with the sole exception of the shoe, which could hardly lodge extremities strongly developed and distanced through arboreal climbing; women graced themselves with the well-known toga-shaped Hawaiian gown. Adorned with a stylishly bordered garment, with gold or tortoise rings on her finger, a fresh wreath of

Carrying Drinking Water in Cocoanuts — Nauru

A Summer Pavilion — Nauru

white or red flowers on her neck and head, and fragrant with high-priced perfumery, an island belle might tempt even Cupid's heart.

Far from repulsive, indeed, is the native with his tan skin, soft black hair, coffee-brown eyes, slightly protruding lips, trivially prominent cheek-bones, a nose straight in profile though flattened at the nostrils, and a round chin in harmony with the slanting forehead and the oblong contour of the face. In line with our principle of the powder-puff is also the native's conception of a beautiful complexion — the lighter, the prettier.

Woman cultivates a nimble and elegant gait. The charm of her noble deportment is enhanced by flowing or braided hair. This is treated at regular intervals first in the sea, then in fresh water, and is finally anointed with freshly grated cocoanut meat. A cleaner scalp there could not be but for a throng of marauders which, routed out of their lairs one by one, are put to death with the teeth. Ideal teeth must be as "regular as fence-posts, as hard as shell, and as white as ocean foam."

The native's sight is keen. His eye

distinguishes the rising smoke of a distant steamer when ours perceives only the barren sky line. On the other hand it does not discern blue from green, nor does it possess the notion of the parallel, as is evidenced by all native huts in their oblique position to the road.

To mar health and beauty there existed till the arrival of the white man but one malignant disease, viz., leprosy. Leprosy appears in copper-colored ulcers and shrinks the bone of the fingers and toes in such a manner as to leave the nails at the end of hideously shortened stumps.

All other diseases yielded to the power of plant medicines administered by certain families in strictest secrecy. Previous to the treatment the sick person was rubbed with oil, sand, and salt-water. Henceforth the quack-doctor, the patient, and their respective husbands and wives were barred from marital relations under pain of aggravating the illness or bringing about a relapse. Sexual restriction held until the complete recovery of the patient and ended with a banquet tendered to the medicine-man.

Toward the end of the eighties malignant

diseases were imported from the Caroline Islands. As far back as the middle of the last century American whalers used to sail to the Eastern Caroline Islands to 'winter' and provision their vessels for the next season. The sailors, upon chasing sea-monsters, gave free rein to their social inclinations whilst the handsome brown lasses entertained no suspicions of fatal disease. The germs were carried to the Marshall Islands by two chiefs who drifted to Kusaie and were repatriated on a trading ship. In a short while pernicious infections became manifest in the form of putrid sores, short-lived babes, and a rapidly declining population.

The natives were helpless even after the settling of a European physician on the main island of Jaluit. His professional services remained unavailable, because the chieftains refused to defray the expense of treatment and operation for their subjects.

In the year 1904 a certain chieftain of the western group intended to purchase a new schooner. His and his father's subjects were forbidden to see the doctor. Called to account, he explained indifferently that he could not

allow 'unnecessary' outlays. When he was further asked to give his reason for objecting to the operation on a woman whose relatives had promised a certain amount of money, he replied calmly but brutally: "If an operation is uncertain of success, let the patient die in peace." These words revealed in utter frankness how little common natives are cared for and how ungratefully the chieftains act toward slaves who, year after year, lay Croesus-like treasures at their feet.

Bushy Hair — Nauru

Pretty but Infected — Nauru

CHAPTER IV

Characteristics

ONE hundred years ago Adalbert von Chamisso drew an extravagant picture of the natives. He portrayed them as "lively, inquisitive, witty, brave, upright, hospitable, chaste, without duplicity or guile;" he praised their "innocent and graceful customs, exquisite modesty, well-bred politeness, and exceptional cleanliness." In another breath he avowed that the islanders stole, broke their word, and waged war.

As a matter of fact, the native is sparing in words, but very intelligent. His attempt at explaining natural phenomena and analysing character amazes the explorer. In conversation witty sallies follow one upon another to the accompaniment of ringing laughter.

Congenial and sympathetic, he shows untiring devotion to sick relatives and friends. At all times the patient's hut is densely filled with

visitors and the tidings of his demise are broken to landing members of the family with utmost consideration.

His love and friendships are tender. A chieftain wrote to a missionary friend: "I am glad to write to tell you how I am faring. I am well. Though feeling fine I can not forget thee, my dearest friend. I am sorry at not seeing thee every day. My throat (heart) is burning, because I can not converse with thee. What could drive thee from my throat? Nothing but death will make me forget thee. As long as I live I shall remember thee until I die and vanish from this earth."

Intimate love rings in the following literally translated poem:

It is a fact: I can think of thee only,
There is no evading it.
Wrapped in thoughts of thee
I am weary in my sleep
And toss to and fro on my couch.
I can bear it no longer.
I struggled; however, in vain.
No, death only will part thy soul and mine.
What could estrange our love?
Who separate us? I scorn everything.

I again weaken, infatuated with thy voice
Which I love and causes me to sigh.
Oh, I recognize her who is mine.
O friend, who could break our Love?
O friend, when shall I see the joyful hour
When I may stand by thy side
And lean against thee?
Who will meet thee to tell of my love?

Friendship means actual relationship. Beware! A chieftain of the Mille atoll deigned to befriend me. Two years after his 'first declaration' I paid a visit to his wife's matronly mother. She was ill and under the care of thirty women. At the hour of departure she politely reprimanded me for calling her by name and not by the sweet title of 'mother.' Joking for an explanation I received the painful initiation charge: "See here, you are my son-in-law's friend; hence I am your mother; my sister is your aunt; my brother is your uncle; my son-in-law's wife, my daughter, is — your wife." I bowed gracefully out of the hut and blushingly whispered a word of excuse.

Sensitive to humiliation, a girl said: "The

teacher may beat me if he will, but he must not shame me before the other pupils." A slight causes keen feeling, and biting remarks cut to the quick. At the meeting of relatives and acquaintances bashfulness dictates a quiet and taciturn behavior; a short pause ensues before the joy of welcome breaks all bounds.

Hospitality is paramount. Whoever passes by a hut at mealtime — although etiquette forbids to arrive precisely at that hour — is offered food and drink. Nay, a mother serves out everything, even to strange children, keeping for herself a mere mouthful. Reminded of her excessive liberality she answers with the proverb, "Were my fingers not made to be spread?" A miser is branded by the saying, "Hast thou eatables thou passest over yonder; have I thou passest here."

Of course, the hospitality extended to a stranger implies the truism that one good turn deserves another. He is expected to defray expenses and to distribute among the poor hosts the very gifts received at their hands. His generosity is hailed with the blessing, "Since

thou returnest thy present ashore, may favorable wind wait on thee!"

The native is peaceful and not easily excited; but when he does fly into a passion, his anger — as usual with phlegmatics — knows no limit. At sea his calm can not be shaken by the most threatening tempests. Familiar with the ocean from earliest youth he braves storm and waves.

Is the picture all light? By no means.

Above all there is indolence and laziness. Nearly all work, such as canoe-building, mat-braiding, sewing, washing, ironing, and cooking, is done in a sitting position. But why work at all? Mother earth has spoiled him: soil and ocean yield eatables in abundance. A missioner who chided the natives for their lack of industry was criticized by a chieftain in the terse and characteristic remark, "Isn't he a simpleton; he does not seem to recollect that cocoanuts hang high up on the palm!"

Telling lies is a matter of course; the liar merely challenges his hearer to discover the truth. At a dance I complimented a woman on her cleverness in composing librettos and songs. To my amazement she turned all praise

aside and denied having ever written a piece of poetry. Reference to her well-known talents proved of no avail. Finally I said to her: "Did you not compose the song for the sailors who recently departed for San Francisco aboard 'Hercules'? She blushed and said naively: "Oh, I thought you did not know it."

A native was suspected of having stolen chickens at the governor's. He pleaded not-guilty until the governor-judge exclaimed in a rage: "Not only did you steal chickens from me this time, but on former occasions you stole some too!" Insulted by the accusation the thief retorted: "No, judge, this was the first time!"

No one hesitates to confirm his false statement by oath as long as God is appealed to as a witness. His countenance changes, however, at the request to swear "by the face of son or daughter" and especially "by the face of his first-born child."

Kids — Nauru

CHAPTER V

Social Strata

A LONG procession of men moves slowly and gravely from the lagoon shore to the middle of the island, carrying on poles baskets of breadfruit, cocoanuts, and baked fish, dozens of large pandanus fruit, and stocks of bananas. Their lively chatter ceases upon reaching the front of a large hut. The heavy burdens are deposited in scrupulous silence. Every one walks in a stooping position. Not a word is whispered before the newcomers are seated and the owner of the village palace, in sheer wonder and admiration, smiles and calls the names of certain families. At once two men rise and transport a basket to the appointed parties. More names are called and more baskets disappear. The remaining ones, with the sweetest food, are brought into the tiny kitchen near the large hut. A smile, and the caller of family names converses with the

providers strung in a half-circle and at a respectable distance from him — the high chieftain.

A miniature monarch. Favored by birth and inheritance, he is the only property-owner. Every parcel of land, running from shore to shore, is cultivated by a family and has the name, though not the rights, of a 'homestead.' Whatever the land produces from January to July is surrendered to the land-lord; the produce of the other six months goes toward government taxes, the support of the cotter's family, and food tributes to the chieftain whenever present on the island. The villein's riches consist in the 'fewness of his wants.' "Execrable landlordism!" the Irish would say. "Down with autocracy!" we Americans would exclaim. Yet the native, steeped in feudalism, resents interference with tradition.

In June, 1905, a tidal-wave destroyed some western islands of the Jaluit atoll and reduced the natives to destitution. A few months after the sad event the high mogul returned from the northern islands. Soon an aged fisherman called on me and requested a loan of three

dollars. He was refused the amount, not because his fishing account failed to show any credit, but because his chieftain, in whose favor the loan was suspected to be made, enjoyed the reputation of an inveterate miser. The old man begged and begged, shed tears, and implored as touchingly as irresistibly: "If I fail to pay a tribute to the chieftain he will chase my family from the allotted land; but if you hand me the amount I shall fish for you to the grave."

During the five dreadful hours of tidal-wave and hurricane, in 1905, the natives protected the home of their chieftain with unflinching devotion. Asked by a white settler why they did not seek refuge in the secure store of the foreign trading company, a native answered haughtily: "You white men may die with your governor; we shall meet death together with our chief.

The monarch's mere expression of a wish equals a command to surrender, not only in matters of ornament, trinket, and money, but also in sacred family rights. For instance, he praises the charms of a woman and her husband

opposes him not; he enters a home and asks the man to spend the night somewhere else, leaving the life-partner to his control. Aye, he claims the 'right of the first night' to every pubescent girl, his own daughters included. Even after adopting Christianity — more or less sincerely — he prefers 'excommunication' to the foregoing of this voluptuous right. No doubt, husbands and parents could contend against the infringement of their primary authority; however, the thwarting of evil designs would mean to them banishment to some distant island, forcible separation from one another, or complete poverty.

A girl of high descent possesses the same rights as a chieftain. If she is married to a nobleman her invitation to a youth for a nightly interview imperils his life inasmuch as the jealous chieftain, unmindful of his wife's privilege, tries to punish her chosen lover even with death.

The exercise of these prerogatives after the introduction of venereal diseases depopulated the islands. Inevitably the 'society people' were most severely stricken; the rank of nobil-

ity, inherited by a mother's exalted birth, became extinct for the lack of noble female scions.

For several decades the chieftains were thus obliged to adopt into polygamy's harem the most desirable fairies of the vassal class and to establish the order of second class wives. Poor women, subjected to precise rules of seclusion: sojourn in the hut by day and by night, no outing to the seashore unchaperoned, no visit with men of high or low rank.

At the chieftain's death his property and wives are inherited by a brother of his; in the absence of lateral heirs the land becomes the estate of his direct descendants and the wives live with more distant relatives. To mourn the late lord all female vassals cut their hair and spend six days and six nights on his grave. After this official mourning no woman is permitted to pass by the seashore side of the chieftain's grave, lest his passions flare up again, passions which polygamy and old age had long since set at rest.

CHAPTER VI

Woman and Youth

'KINDLING wood of my throat!' 'My fragrant wreath!' 'Iris of my eye!' 'My own face!' such sweet expressions aid a boy of fourteen to ingratiate himself into the favors of a pretty girl, twelve years of age and fully developed. Should the wooing youth meet with her parents' disapproval, her burning love might flash in a firy poem:

Oh, wait for me at night!
Crouch hiding near my hut!
We meet each other so seldom
Spite our ardent yearning.

Thou hast begun; go on,
Onward urge to obtain the end!
However, keep silent, silent,
That no one hear of it.

Thou hast begun; there's no return.
Condemned to death, who fears?
Free is the path to the favored site,
The site that fills my longing.

The Fatter the Prettier — Nauru

Family of the High Chieftain — Nauru

Quick! Neither dirt nor dampness hurt.
What shall I do? Always sigh in vain?
A grave I shall dig and nurse the secret
That no one know about it.

Let him sink down and prepare the site
To satisfy his love for me.
He is enraptured with this lassie:
To thee alone belongs this hour.

Marriage is contracted without pompous ceremonies. Presents offered by the bridegroom to his father and mother-in-law assuage their sorrow at the loss of their daughter. For ever? Perhaps not. It is mutually understood that the ties of wedlock shall be loosened at the first serious quarrel or suspicion of unfaithfulness. Only through the birth of a babe is the marriage bond made real and unbreakable, but since the arrival of offspring is artificially postponed, security is held in suspense for years.

Young boys and girls, without lessons in eugenics, are familiar with sex problems and sexual intimacies. It is the part of cunning to conceal prenuptial and postnubial violations. Early in the evening the young man retires to a secluded place and folds a pandanus leaf in

equal parts. If there is no protruding tip, the divination announces absolute safety in entering his sweetheart's hut even in the light of the full moon; if the folds of the leaf show a projection, the oracle spells a possible exposure to observation and counsels postponement of the meeting.

Unfaithfulness leads to brawls, altercations, and bloodshed. Should the married woman hate separation from her husband, she tries to retaliate in body at the first chance or brand the guilty woman with public blemish. To my knowledge an angry spouse bit a chunk out of her rival's cheek, and another laid the lower part of her antagonist's septum bare.

Yet there are exemplary married couples, fond of each other and of their children. Woman's grief at the loss of her husband grows to such intensity that she, in an astral form, begins to fly. You, dear reader, may laugh at the idea of a living aeroplane in mourning, but every native will call you a cold-hearted creature, unfamiliar with the pangs of love's sorrow. According to common assertion a flying woman resembles a mysterious

fairy with outstretched body, waving hair, arms bent backward, gliding majestically through the air towards a thicket, and resting weightless on the extremity of a palm leaf. At the same time she may be seen, moaning and restless, near the seashore.

Babies are born in the presence of adults and children. The happy mother rests near a fire on which four sticks of wood are burning. Her body is frequently and vigorously massaged to restore it to its original form and beauty. Two days later she again fulfills her domestic duties and nurses her infant for two or three years with tender care.

The child is named after animals, plants, or lifeless objects, never after father and mother. This name is not spoken by its bearer. If you wish to learn a native's name, please ask someone else. If you admire somebody's baby, never be as impolite as to pat its head and cheeks — they are sacred and noli me tangere. Also beware of taking the balmy wreath from the head of a chieftain's daughter: it's a grievous insult next to defloration.

The little ones spend most of the time near

the seashore, playing in sand and waves. With its freedom of motion the watery element attracts the little urchins, free from and unhampered by clothing. When parental pride begins to clothe innocence, the first dress covers the boy's body from shoulder to hips and the girl's first apparel is worn retroussé.

Public bashfulness belies inner corruption.

Three Kiddies — Nauru

Ready for the Dance — Nauru

CHAPTER VII

Religion

LORD Canoe said to the ocean: "Have a reef!" and the atoll appeared. "Have sand!" and dirt spread over the rock. "Have plants!" and the vegetation grew. "Have birds!" and birds flew about. One of them circled higher and higher and suspended the sky above the clouds. "Have men!" and four men came in sight: West, North, Day-maker, and South.

A carbuncle grew on Lord Canoe's calf and issued, on breaking, Mr. Solid Rock and Lady Fertile Earth. Lady Earth gave life to two boys: Zenith and Nadir. These, perched with their uncle on a huge arrow-root stalk, which developed tropically tall, reached the sky. Constant strife forced Solid Rock to nightly wakes, during one of which he dropped from the firmament and settled on the Jaluit atoll. Another carbuncle on the thigh freed him from

Master Clever-Head and Father-of-the-Rainbow. Sent to Aunt Tortoise at Bikar, Father-of-the Rainbow refused to swallow a nauseating drink and remained stupid, whereas Clever-Head consumed the disgusting potion and proved superior to his brother in talent and rascality until a triangular love affair in the Gilbert Islands ended his career.

According to another version the anthropogeny is as follows:

Lord Canoe

Solid Rock Lady Earth

Nadir Zenith Tidal-Wave Cocoanut

Rainbow Clever-Head

This religion is evidently island born and island narrow-visioned.

All the deities, or super-men, are feared and worshiped by the natives as 'constrictors' because they occupy the main points of the compass, restrict man's physical and spiritual happiness through disease, witchcraft and dreams, and command a host of 'evil 'spirits' whose business it is to afflict the living and steal souls from languishing bodies. Only fairies and elves — who lead a frolicsome life, haunt

the thickets, and occasionally appear in human forms — enrich their favorites with valuables unknown to mortal eyes and even with living treasures, commonly called babies. Lack of secrecy, however, puts gnomes and charms to flight.

The Lord God resides on the island of Eb (Yap?) 'somewhere in the west.' Twice a year — at the beginning of the breadfruit and of the pandanus season — a public sacrifice is offered to the gods. At the more solemn pandanus festivity a cocoanut leaf, folded in the form of a bird, is put on the ground and thus introduced by the sorcerer: "This bird has been sent eastward by the gods to taste the food of the islands." He then pierces a pandanus fruit, carries it westward, and thrusts it piecemeal into the ocean. A committee of specially selected men retire to the seashore to cook eatables on a large hearth for the general public and small specimens on a side fire for the gods. These specialties are placed in a canoe-shaped pandanus leaf and are set adrift on the ocean. After two days of seclusion the picked men, in wild excitement,

return to the meeting place. All men and the fully adorned women stream into the sorcerer's hut where the wrinkled sorceress belabors and kicks and curses a pandanus fruit. A copious meal ends the festivity.

After death the human spirit dwells in the grave for six days and rises to wander across the southern and northern reefs to Eorok, an island surrounded with a stone wall. The soul which approaches the island in the form of a large sailing canoe will live on crab butter and appear to mortals; the soul which nears the island in the form of a small canoe can not swing over the wall and is condemned to live on holothurians. Life in the beyond lasts as long as the possibility of apparitions and allows native spiritists years of occult communications.

CHAPTER VIII

Superstition

WOMAN, raised in sensuous gratification to the pinnacle of fascination and adulation, may spoil many an enterprise. Let her peep at the fisherman while they encircle and guide a school of bonitos to the reef and failure is certain. Let her partake of a fish speared by a first-born and he loses all skill in thrusting the weapon. Let a woman step ashore one of the northern million-bird islands without having previously submitted to a sorcerer's incantation and not a single bird will be caught. Let a woman be at the seashore whilst early in the morning a man divines with the aid of a pandanus leaf and the leaf is powerless to answer correctly. It is equally ineffective when the sorcerer unites with his wife before he throws it into the ocean and bathes in the waves. Aboard a canoe the same pan-

danus leaf is weak when a woman changes position at the time of the divination. During the catamenial days every married woman lives retired in a special hut at the west side of which she cooks her own meals; should one of her sons see the smoke of this fire he will be blind in warfare. During the same days of seclusion a woman is not permitted to travel on a large canoe with the other passengers; her abode is a small kennel of pandanus leaves. An infant is hurt by evil spirits when an expectant mother leaves her hut after dusk. While a young mother is being massaged no one is allowed to eat of her food.

To eat two different kinds of fish at the same meal relaxes the bowels; to eat fish and meat at the same meal causes colds and cowardice; to eat the fruit of an island which was tabood by the chieftain, without wearing a string around the wrist, makes a person ill. Whoever eats a breadfruit which in its ripeness fell from the tree and burst, will break a limb. Fish can not be hooked by a fisherman who eats cooked food before fishing or passes by graves. Who eats

raw fruit first and tortoise meat immediately after, loosens his teeth.

When a dead whale drifts to the east side of an atoll, the death of a chieftain is imminent; when it drifts to the west side, the birth of a noble baby is near. Death is presaged to parents by the insatiable appetite of their children, the premature bearing of a pandanus tree, and the precocious development of their daughter. The imminent death of some person is evident by unsteady wind or the appearance of a cumulo-stratus cloud.

To bathe an infant in the smooth sea while Pleiades are rising early in the morning, is healthful.

The increasing voice of a lizard in the thatched roof indicates constant welfare of distant relatives; its morendo the near death of one of them. An extended trip is foretold by a crab walking across one's sleeping mat.

The finger which points to a rainbow will turn crooked.

The approach of a canoe or of a large vessel from another atoll is told by strong waves on the inner shore, by short showers in the north

and south, by fleece-like cirrus clouds at night, and by extraordinary sleepiness.

A fisherman is made aware of his wife's unfaithfulness at shore by two flying fishes approaching his net in a parallel position.

CHAPTER IX

Figurative Language

"HE IS the child of a tropic bird." He is a chieftain's child, because the red-tailed tropic bird, called by Linné the 'son of the sun,' is king of the tropical seas.

"She leans against a black parrot fish." She is married to a chieftain. The black parrot fish, a great delicacy, is the proper food for persons of rank.

"Beware of the smile of a frigate bird!" Never trust the smile of a chieftain. Hearing agreeable and disagreeable news he may greet the guilty with a smile, but he will punish him sooner or later.

A good chief is "a lantern fish." As this fish keeps in darkness and hiding till its prey comes in sight, so the chief stays at home to receive the food contributions of his subjects.

The native who leaves his food baskets in front of the chieftain's residence in his absence

and does not wait for his return "deposits the baskets a la sandpiper;" he is restless like a limicoline bird.

"The freight of an amber-gris canoe appeases one's hunger." All amber-gris found on the seashore must be brought to the chieftain. The tiniest piece of food given by him to the natives who welcome him to their island proves satiating because of its high origin.

It is impolite to pay the chieftain an extended visit, since many subjects like to have a private conversation with him and hate to explain matters in the presence of others. Hence the warning is given to the one who dwells too long: "Lighten the bottom of the fishing net!" Since shadows frighten fish away, fishermen carefully avoid standing in the light of their seine.

Even the lowliest chieftain is "a tree knot that breaks the ax." A canoe-builder who fails to pay attention to a small knot may spoil his broadax; a native who neglects a nobleman because of his lesser prestige courts disaster, since he too has the right to condemn subjects to death.

In the estimation of a chieftain the common native is but a "shark-hook." The shark which disappears with hook and bait inflicts an insignificant damage on the fisherman as a shark-hook is never made of precious mother-of-pearl. Likewise death, in taking a subject, deprives the chieftain of a relatively worthless being.

Yet, the chieftain's son must not "cut down the cocoanut husking-stick." Such a stick is found near every hut and is used daily; its wanton destruction deprives the native of a most necessary means of preparing his daily food. Through the youth's libertine acts the subject is irritated and less willing to feed the royal family.

Similarly a chieftain must not "tread upon coral gravel," i. e., must not exact too much from a poor subject. The floor of a common hut is covered with coral stone and coarse mats, whereas that of a noble hut has several layers of mats, the upper one beautifully woven.

Happy is the woman who "walks under the strong front-beam near the lagoon," in the fine residence of the chieftain; unhappy the one who

"hangs from a dry bough," i. e., who is married to a pauper of low rank.

Every chief's wife is a "spider crab on land." The spider crab is poisonous — the abuse of a noble woman entails death.

When a native has to negotiate with one of the chief's wives, he must "go to the channel through which a school of fish swims onto the reef" and "not to the channel through which they return to the ocean." All schools of fish come to the table reef at definite depressions and the fisherman place their bag nets accordingly. Thus a native must address himself to the leading woman and not to the lower ones who can not gain him a favor. It would be like placing the seine in front of the 'get-off' cut.

Of a common girl taken by the chieftain as secondary wife to his residence near the lagoon jealous natives say: "She became visible as a wild pandanus and recently made her appearance on the lagoon shore."

A chieftain who calls on another and does not find him on the island is fed by the subjects and usually shows his gratitude by offer-

ing a roll of preserved breadfruit. This roll is given to the returning chieftain with the remark: "A thanksgiving gift for sweet cocoanuts."

It is a bad qualification to say of a woman "she entwined buds and blossoms in the same wreath." In a wreath either buds alone or blossoms alone are used, not a mixture of both. The expression signifies forbidden relations between blood relatives or members of the same clan.

Whoever contracts marriage with a near relative "rests on a branch of the same breadfruit tree." Such a near relative is, like a hollow tree, "outwardly hale but inwardly rotten."

An immoral individual is called an "eal man." He is roaming about and appears near a hut from one direction and another, as an eal on the table reef peeps through this hole and that to snatch a victim.

A thief is 'snail-fingered.' Everything sticks.

A person recovering from illness in spite of obstensible neglect on the part of relatives was "cut off as a sea snake." The sequestered part of a snake keeps in motion long after death.

A man caught in the act of immorality is a "child in answering," i. e., as imprudent as a child, entrusted with a love message, innocently betrays the sender of the billet-doux, if the wrong party is addressed.

A diligent canoe-builder is called "a sea urchin of the broadax." Through his constant application to the art of hewing he loses flesh and his ribs resemble the spines of a sea urchin.

"Never believe an answer à la meeting!" Public speakers, often influenced by the assembled crowd, hide their true opinion. Politicians.

The native who steps aboard ship without an invitation to the trip and neglects to bring provisions along "comes aboard like a wave."

Happy Youth — Nauru

Oiled for a Dance — Nauru

CHAPTER X

Proverbs

"DON'T strike your sweetheart's face!" "Don't wrench the wings of a frigate bird!" Never refuse to accept a present, even the tiniest. Such a refusal is similar to offending a beloved person or robbing an eagle of its flight to ethereal heights.

"Woman has her will; man has his." Both act as they please.

"Woman is a passage." Any canoe is permitted to enter the lagoon — woman is common property.

"Woman splits the tribe." A daughter-in-law brings quarrels and disputes into her husband's family.

"Brothers' children love one another; sisters' children don't fear one another." In the first instance two non-related women rule; in the second related ones insist on their rights, inducing feuds and strife.

"I have no toes on my heels." You irritated me to such extent as to make me leave you and your home in anger and fury, never to return.

"Fingers have spaces in between." Fingers may be spread to let the gifts of liberality slip from the palm of the hand through them.

"Take on canoe eyes; throw off the land eyes." You may sleep on the shore, but be vigilant while sailing.

"There's our grave; we are about to sail, we are dead." We shall brave storms and billows courageously; should misfortune condemn us to die at sea, the ocean shall be our welcome grave.

"We fathom the ocean, but man's heart we can not sound."

"Don't presume to teach a tatooing master!" Don't talk wise to a man with a superior knowledge to yours. Tatooing is a past art.

"Don't believe your wife!" Accusations are leveled by woman against others to divert her husband's attention from herself.

"Mother is near the food basket; father is the father of others." A mother cares for her children who are undeniably her own flesh and

blood; the father may have to provide for offspring with other women.

"What, do you take me for someone else's child?" Brothers and sisters should exhibit tender solicitude for one another.

"I was it yesterday and the day before; you are it in these days." The widow of a deceased chieftain, transferred to his brother's, is no longer entitled to first consideration; the brother's wives hold the rank of counsel.

"She jumps over the east side of the hearth." A girl who is raised to the dignity of a chieftain's wife forgets the persons whose cares kept her alive and in good health.

"He steals pandanus fruit from the middle of the island." A daring malefactor executes his deed even where he be easily caught.

"We thought his quiet behavior sincere." Some persons keep silent when the conversation runs about others; they, however, are the very gossipers.

"Don't challenge a man's blood!" Don't challenge me for a regatta, for I shall win.

"If you withhold this from me we shall not meet again but in the beyond." Refuse to

comply with my wish and we are parted forever.

"Don't dwell far from us!" Relatives quarrel until one member of the family leaves the home; then his loss is keenly felt and a plea is entered for his return.

"Who could trample upon or jump over his pleadings?" I could not resist his earnest prayers.

"Don't set anything afire!" You are telling evident lies.

"Don't knock the sun's head!" To open almonds at the time of the rising sun might induce the solar globe to hide behind the clouds.

"The pandanus leaf of the north is unwrapped." War is declared and the wrappings have been taken from the shark teeth of the spear.

"Don't narrow the wide ocean!" Fishermen should not be angry at their wives for throwing a fish away; the ocean contains aplenty.

"Their knowledge is watered." The other pretentious family does not possess the same thorough knowledge as ours.

"As if he did not look for firewood." Sometimes we hunt for objects that lie directly under our eyes or can not decide about obvious matters. Firewood may be had everywhere.

"Don't hew the edge of a giant clam!" Don't quarrel for petty reasons, for one word gives another to ruin friendship and harmony.

"Small gifts are powerful; sticks irritate." Liberality makes friends; stinginess drives them away.

"He has the eyes of a flatfish." As the flatfish has both eyes on the upper side and swims on the other, so a person may be blind to the needs of his relatives and lavish to strangers.

He evades à la flatfish." A flatfish in danger stirs up mud and hides for safety. An evasive answer conceals the truth.

"Cast-away food." When a beloved person is absent food is set apart as if present, to remember him.

"Her gum is as red as the back-fin of a goldfish, her teeth are as white as ocean-foam, and as strong as a giant clam." Biting love and glorious praise.

CHAPTER XI

Lost at Sea

AFTER three years of sojourn on the Marshall Islands I decided to commandeer the knowledge of an educated half-breed on the Ebon atoll to revise a voluminous dictionary and grammar of the native tongue. Towards the end of the linguistic task a chief's schooner arrived, aboard which an opportunity was given me to sail for Ailinglablab (about 150 miles north-west of Ebon.)

At the hour appointed for sailing the chief-captain hesitated, awaiting the arrival of more provisions. From various directions canoes came with delicious eatables: pandanus-fruit, cocoanuts, breadfruit, bananas, and — last but not least — a good-sized hog roasted whole in a fireplace to a copper-burnished color. The old man passed the right hand over his mouth and smacked his lips. . . . . weigh the anchor.

It was Thursday afternoon. A favorable

breeze led the schooner most gently from the passage northward. Aboard were ten men, five women, two girls, two babies, and only one white man — myself.

Comfort? The dining-room, twelve feet square, contained a table with four chairs, two berths burdened with trunks and mats, and a side bench upon which stood in a row a can of kerosene, a can of sea-biscuits, and a can of sugar. Three stocks of bananas hung from the walls. From one corner to its diagonal, across the table, a line served during rainy weather for drying the clothes of men, women and children. Amidships were two narrow cabins infested with thousands of cockroaches; on its bunks rested two mats; the pillow-slips, once white, had taken on the color of the natives.

Calm reigned until Saturday evening; dark clouds obscured the sky and poured down torrential rains. The vessel rocked dangerously on the high waves, and the sailors drowned the sound of the splashing waters in their boisterous yells. Courage steeled every heart. Ailinglablab was to be sighted before sunset.

Early Sunday morning the outlook heralded a schooner steering in our direction. At hailing distance, 'mid the roaring wind, the following conversation ensued:

"Whence do you come?"

"From Likieb." (One hundred miles to the north).

"Were you at Ailinglablab?"

"No, we are looking for it."

The other vessel followed in our wake till evening when it turned west. Throughout the night a strong wind prevailed. Yet at dawn the longed-for atoll did not loom up.

Dead calm till Wednesday. Evidently we had lost our course. Where might we be on the watery plain?

Our provisions began to run low. In two days the porker had been consumed. No more bread but a few biscuits, some rice and sugar.

All hopes centered on an elderly man who, during thirty years of navigation, had never experienced an unlucky voyage. After ancestors' fashion he sailed by observing the waves and the stars. According to custom, however, he

was not allowed to take charge of the schooner before the chieftain would request him to do so. This order came on Wednesday.

Upon examining the waves for hours and hours the old seaman altered the course. In his opinion we were between the western and the eastern chain of islands, far to the east of Ailinglablab.

On Thursday the impatient chieftain changed the course repeatedly. A mild rain fell. Electrified by it a school of albicores neared the vessel, jumping to a height of twenty feet and parading their glittering colors in the rays of the sun. Four albicores were caught and were devoured by the natives with the eagerness of starved hyenas.

On Friday morning again nothing but the immeasurable ocean was to be seen. The chieftain, utterly depressed and melancholy, whispered to me pityingly: "It is useless for you to study our tongue. We are all to die of hunger and thirst; you will go first since you are not inured to starvation as we are." I consoled him and bade a sailor climb the main mast hourly

to scan the ocean. It was sad to see him watch the horizon in deadly silence.

Finally, at noon, the boatswain yelled with all his might, "Land, Land!" The old chieftain — I shall never forget the expression on his ugly face — rushed in inordinate craze from his cabin opposite mine, stared at me idiotically, and trembled with joy. Shouts of exultation sounded on deck, mingled with the anxious question, "Which island, which island?" It is Erikub, one hundred and eighty miles to the northeast of Ailinglablab and uninhabited.

The seamen counseled to set out for Likieb. In its harbor we dropped anchor early Saturday morning, happy to meet half-breeds and to appease our hunger.

A few days later I reached Ailinglablab and chartered the same vessel to take me to the Jaluit atoll. At the end of this adventurous fortnight I vowed by Jove that never again would I sail on a native schooner.

Rumor and Australian newspapers had it that I was drowned. Continental newspapers copied the report and for four months a beloved mother mourned the death of her

favorite son till a letter, written at the boundaries of the world, yet this side of the beyond, hardened the fact that his soul still pulsed in his body.

CHAPTER XII

On Ruins

IN THE year 1905 the trade wind blew continuously till the end of June. On the last day, at noon, the breakers increased in volume, overflowed the road along the seashore, and broke through the bulwark of the coral bank which ordinarily paralyzes their impetus.

About five o'clock in the evening a sudden cry of horror rang through the island. A wave, as high as a house and as perpendicular as a wall, was seen moving to the shore. In an instant it wrecked the doctor's office and home, several native huts, and the boarding-school of the Sisters, dragging teachers and girls in its sweep. Nearly all white men with their charges fled towards the lagoon side — the island itself measures but 400 feet in width — and barricaded themselves in the commercial

company's large store built on high and strong cement foundations.

At sunset the storm set in and developed to a regular hurricane. Sheet-iron, torn from the roofs of residences and stores, flew through the air; trees crashed to the ground; limbs and building material were hurled with incredible force against the walls of the storehouse. The air was "full of farewells to the dying."

The iron flagmast near the storehouse was battered to the ground with a loud crash. The front of the building gave way and a burning lantern was hurled toward hundreds of cans of coal oil. For a time it appeared as if fire would consume the store and drive us into the storm. Happily a gust of wind extinguished the flame.

Flashes of lightning revealed more and more waves rolling towards the store. Two missionaries prepared the members of their Church for death whilst some of the white men kept bottles of whiskey in readiness to drown the feeling of danger or death in unconsciousness.

At midnight the waves lost their fury and the storm ceased to rage. For the rest of the night we settled in the store as best we could.

What a sad spectacle the island offered at daybreak! Roofless buildings, blown-off stories, the ground littered with trees, branches, canoes, boards, fence-wire, coral stones, and large boulders. A scene of utter ruin.

Little by little we received word from the northern islets of the same Jaluit atoll and of two eastern atolls. The center of the hurricane had passed two miles north of us, killing eighty natives and stripping several islets of all their palms, and some even of their soil down to the solid rock. On Mille and Arno two hundred and ten natives lost their lives. Among them was a chieftain who aided me most faithfully and intelligently in studying the native tongue, customs, and myths. He was washed from the land. Twice he succeeded in swimming to the shore. The third time he became entangled in the roots of an overturned cocoanut palm and died. The son of a white trader of Mille had, at the appearance of the first wave, taken to a boat, together with a sister and his sweetheart. The boat was crushed by the weight of the impact. For a half hour he swam, sustaining his sister with one arm and his darling with the

other. A little later he tried to speak to them but received no answer. He was holding two corpses. Throughout the night he battled for life, alternately swimming and resting with the art of a desperate expert. At dawn he reached ashore, stark-naked and exhausted.

A wide-spread famine followed the hurricane. One day an aged native with sunken cheeks and blue lips said to me: "I can not obtain any provisions from either the government or the Commercial Company. Now I ask you to take pity on my family. If you don't, please hand me your shotgun and I shall kill my starving relatives and myself, for life is not worth living." Could Christian charity be cold-hearted?

CHAPTER XIII

Commerce

WITH the exception of trepang, shark-fins and pearl-shells the Marshall Islands proper furnish for export nothing but dried cocoanuts — copra — and for import they need eatables, wearing apparel, and building material. The trade in copra is profitable, since the natives are paid from $22 to $33 per ton whereas the commercial companies receive from $80 to $130 for the same quantity in the markets of Sydney, London, Marseille, and Hamburg.

One island, however, is a "million-dollar jewel" owing to its valuable deposits of phosphate of lime — Nauru, or Pleasant Island, a half degree south of the equator and 320 miles south of the Ebon atoll.

Pleasant, indeed, is the band of cocoanut palms which lines the seashore and shades native huts as well as poetically meandering

After Hurricane and Tidal-Wave — Marshall Islands

pathways. Pleasant are the perpendicular rocks which rise beyond the band of palms to a height of two hundred feet and harbor in their crevices enough soil to nourish a variety of trees, brushes, and vines. Pleasant also are the natives with their fine appearance, polite manners, and jovial disposition. Unpleasant, however, is the inner plateau enclosed by rocky ramparts, strewn with bowlders, and provided with a soil too poor for the growth of palms. Yet, this very soil contains wonderful treasures worthy to be exploited by England.

Neither Sir Edward Malet nor Prince Bismark suspected the existence of this treasure when, on April 6th, 1886, they adjudged Nauru to German influence with equal trade rights for Great Britain.

The treasure soil was found by an officer of the Pacific Islands Company, Sydney, Australia. Keeping the discovery a secret he searched for similar deposits on Ocean Island, of the Gilbert group, 120 miles to the east of Pleasant Island. While the exploitation of Ocean Island by the Pacific Islands Company was paying good dividends, the Jaluit Company

of Hamburg, which by charter held the guano monopoly for the Marshall Islands, vainly endeavored to secure German capital to work the phosphate fields of Pleasant Island. At this juncture the English Company offered to the Jaluit Company the surrender of all its trading stations in the Marshall group against the privilege of exploiting Nauru and a German participating investment of $300,000 in the newly to be formed 'Pacific Phosphate Company. Hoping to gain a trade monopoly in the Marshall Islands proper the German Company fell into the trap, for a year later the English Steamship Company of Burns, Philp & Co. inaugurated a trade line in the Marshalls. The German Company protested against their 'intrusion' but was defeated through a decision rendered by the tribunal of The Hague. In buying the stations of the Pacific Islands Company the Jaluit gentlemen had "bought out an English concern, but not Britain's treaty rights." The Phosphate Company soon paid enormous dividends and is reaping millions upon millions. At a daily export of 500 tons the supply of phosphate will last more than two

hundred years. Small wonder, therefore, that Great Britain, at the end of the world war, deigned to accept the mandate over Pleasant Island and complacently left the mandate over the less wealthy copra islands to Japan.

Phosphate of lime consists mainly of phosphoric acid and nitrogen. Its fertilizing agent is disclosed through treatment with sulphuric acid.

The island is thought to have originally been a cone with its top near enough the surface of the ocean to permit madrepores and millepores their reef building activity. They worked round the cone head, first downward and then, having reached a certain depth, upward. Centuries passed. Volcanic disturbances, raising the island, laid bare the settlements of the coral builders. On the withered corals millions of birds found welcome resting and brooding places. Centuries passed again and the island dipped into the sea once more, giving the madrepores and millepores an opportunity to build new colonies on the waste of the birds. This process of raise and fall was repeated two

or three times. Under the alternative influence of air and water the guano underwent several chemical processes and hardened to sand and rock.

The discovery of phosphates on Nauru and Ocean Island led business men to hunt for similar treasures in the Caroline and Pelew Islands.

Since Pleasant Island has no harbor and the loading of phosphate into steamers is done in boats operating beyond the surf, bad weather detained many a steamer for weeks and weeks. Meantime others came for their turn, losing months of precious time and draining the Company's treasury. To obviate this evil a wireless station was erected on the island to hail the chartered vessels as needed. Another wireless was opened on the island of Yap (where I suffered my first shipwreck) to direct the shipping of phosphate from the near-by Pelew Islands. Twenty-one years ago, when I lived in Yap on goat meat and taros, I never dreamt that its wireless station would become the object of international and intercontinental strife. It

happened because billions of madrepores and millepores and seabirds created million-dollar treasures and a rival trade between jealous nations.

CHAPTER XIV

New Britain

THE island, situated to the northwest of New Guinea, is 348 miles long and from 12 to 92 miles wide, and has an area of 9,650 square miles with an estimated population of 190,000 inhabitants.

'Dangerous' hailed its ephithet from the date of its discovery. Of the natives one explorer said: "They are savage fellows with frizzly hair; they eat human flesh and are incarnate rascals, and so wicked that even the devils could learn from them." To add to the feeling of horror some adventurers spread the news broadcast that the natives were tailed. Of course the tail, far from being a natural appendage of the body, proved to be a mere ornament used at dances, like a wooden leg fastened and unfastened at will.

In their hunt for free labor on the cotton and sugar plantations of Samoa, Fiji, and

Prospective Brides — Nauru

Pacific Young Men — Nauru

Queensland conscienceless captains wrought incredible havoc with the natives. They rivaled in atrocity the worst African slave-dealers: children were torn from their parents, husbands from their wives, and tortures inflicted upon resisting slaves. Their bereaved relatives, unable to distinguish well-meaning travelers, traders, and missioners from professional slace-hunters, killed many innocent victims in a most gruesome manner. At one station fourteen traders lost their lives. Maybe acts of injustice and excesses on the part of some frenzied specimens justified the hatred the New Britainers bore and partly still bear the white race.

The first colonization of the island, in 1879, recalls the surprisingly fraudulent scheme enacted by the French Marquis de Ray. Unfamilar with the new kingdom of the 'Free Colony of Port Breton'— as he called it — he promised the settlers large tracts of land on an initial payment of ten dollars. Most of the tricked pioneer settlers, after indescribable hardships, left the Free Colony for Australia, cursing the marquis who was sentenced by a

French tribunal to several years imprisonment and died insane. His one sane idea concerned the future development of a fertile and beautiful territory, the true home of extensive cocoanut and cotton plantations.

The Gazelle peninsula, the best known part of New Britain, is divided into a northeastern plateau of low hills and a western range of mountains. Its deep bays are dotted with foaming reefs and green islets. On the elevated plateau of clefted pumice formation wooded hills are interspersed with verdant plains. Everywhere nature overwhelms the spectator with a panorama teeming with life. Tall cocoanut palms, slim arecas and giant breadfruit trees are overtowered by gigantic eucalyptus trees. Like the pillars of a cathedral they shoot heavenward and spread their immense crowns in the shape of green cupolas against the rays of the sun. Every tree is interlaced with parasites, orchids, and lianes whose serpentine roots hang freely to the earth. A bouquet of perennial verdure.

The western part of the peninsula, called Baining, displays the wildest imaginable scen-

ery. Low hills and narrow valleys lead to towering mountain chains and deep ravines. On a sunny day the lofty ridges and barren peaks strangely contrast with the wood-clad slopes and gullies. Almost everywhere the trees, growing side by side, form an impenetrable thicket. Thorny lianes clasp the stems and boughs of large trees and dip down to shackle all neighboring smaller brethren with their living fetters. Narrow paths lead from village to village or to the rivers of the valley. Here and there colossal trees, uprooted by storms or stricken by old age, bar the way. Some show traces of fire but, soaked with rain, defied destruction. The natives climb over them until they moulder and collapse under their feet.

Throngs of jabbering parrots, cooing pigeons, and other wild birds enliven the forest. Its mysterious stretches are broken by wide and deep rivers in which crocodiles abound. Snakes are numerous but harmless. Kangaroos and cassowaries are rare. Nearly all birds possess a gorgeous plumage. The many-colored butterflies are easily the prettiest in the world.

Grandeur and majesty impress the lonely wanderer, yet this paradise is infested with malaria, black-water fever, dysentry, and above all with savages of the man-eating type.

CHAPTER XV

The Cannibal

DO YOU picture the man-eater of New Britain as a jet-black devil with a skeleton framework, large eyes, thick reddish lips, and an apelike chin? Undoubtedly his primeval appearance, untainted by civilization, suggests terror and a respectful distance.

He is sturdily built, muscular, and heavy-jawed. His black and frizzly hair hangs in curls about his head. Feathers or animal and human bones are drawn through the pierced septum and earlobes.

As an object of luxury he carries an umbrella, and his hand-basket holds invariably — no apology is due the fair sex for their lack of vanity — a looking-glass. The mirror is indispensable for 'fixing' every single hair in the artistically 'plucked' strip of beard.

Living in absolute anarchy he acknowledges neither law nor authority. Every one is his

own judge and avenger. Strong enough to fight his adversary he resorts to arms; too weak and friendless he must needs put up with outrage and foul deeds. The key-note of his character is suspicion and fear: suspicion of man and fear of evil. His oval hut, with a narrow and low entrance and a gloomy interior, is hedged in with a bamboo fence. The front gate, laden with shells to attract attention at its opening, never faces the entrance to the hut. While an enemy or unwelcome guest removes the noisy hurdle of the front gate, the hut's occupant escapes through a secret strategic folding door in the rear fence. In his isolation he communicates with his relatives and close kin only, and suspects all others as enemies. Nay, he dreads even the members of his own clan. Every evil that befalls him is due to the charms and incantations of ill disposed neighbors or deceased members of his family.

Such dismal mistrust begets apathy, rudeness, and cruelty. He loves to torture living beings. Poultry are picked alive and are let loose with cut-off legs to flutter to death. Hogs are killed by tying their snout and trampling

them. Newborn cripples are smoked or choked to death. Aged men and women, no longer useful to society, are wrapped up in mats and slowly smothered. Every incestuous person is buried alive and sometimes covered with red-hot stones. Sluggers are hired to overtake an unsuspecting foe in the forest; his body is pierced from below and his neck wrenched in horrible agony.

Courageous as long as he has the upper hand he takes to his heels at threatening danger. On expeditions into unknown parts of the country he protests fearlessness; in the presence of strange tribes, however, he trembles and follows the explorer like a pet-dog.

He deems it supreme folly to confess a culpable deed. A white man found that some one regularly stole the march on him into the poultry yard, and suspected a native who owned but few chickens but sold many eggs day after day to the very owner of the chicken yard. One day he asked him: "How many eggs have you for sale?"

"Six."

"Are they fresh?"

"They are freshly laid."

"How is it you bring some every day?"

"My chickens lay well."

"I think it was my chickens laid them."

"No, no, no. How could you tell?"

"I saw them before."

"You insult me. How could I steal eggs from you and sell them to you?"

"Look here, I marked every egg with two dots and replaced them in the nest."

He protested his innocence, but no more eggs disappeared.

In public and especially in the presence of woman man is shy. Outside his settlement and on public roads a husband scarcely glances at his wife. To upbraid a man before a member of the fair sex is a great insult; to render him tractable, just threaten him with revealing his fault to a woman. On the morning of the marriage the christian groom has often to be dragged from some covert hiding place. Approaching the bride he turns his back to her and at the decisive moment both join hands with averted faces and downcast eyes.

Work is shunned as a supreme evil. Man's

task consists in clearing the plantation. While he hunts, fishes, smokes, and dances, degraded woman is doomed to toil in the plantation and carry the produce to market.

A gentleman of distinction.

CHAPTER XVI

Marriage

IN EVERY family the wife's brother is the most important person. Since the children belong to the mother's tribe and clan he claims them at an early age. It is his duty to provide for their future and to buy them life partners.

In most instances the stingy uncle acquires his nephew's bride as cheaply as possible, i. e., in her young years. Aye, children are bargained away in marriage before they enter the world. The poor groom, unable to choose according to his own taste, must wait patiently and is sometimes forced to answer the query about his wife with the words: "She is still carried on her mother's hip." In no instance may the young man say:

"She is a woman, therefore may be wooed,
She is a woman, therefore may be won."

The match-maker, upon choosing a girl for

A Half-Breed with Daughter — Nauru

Faithful Till Death — Nauru

his nephew, sends a spear together with shell-money to her uncle. Acceptance of the present hails his willingness to consider the proposition. On a certain day both meet and barter about the price of the bride, which ranges from five to seventy-five dollars according to her rank and age.

At the ceremony of betrothal the young girl, in the presence of her assembled relatives, advances toward the prospective bridegroom, offering him betel-nuts and all chewing accessories. If he accepts them he assents to the marriage which takes place as soon as the girl has reached a suitable age. Both families manifest their rejoicing by the exchange of eatables and shell-money.

Frequently unfaithful himself man distrusts his wife and punishes even the semblance of wrong. He even appoints children to spy on her actions. If she elopes with another lover, the deserted husband revenges himself by damaging the adulterer's property. Usually the wife's laziness in preparing meals for the lazy husband and taking care of his plantation leads to

divorce. Her uncle is then bound to refund the purchase-money to the disgruntled man.

Youths for whom a little girl is intended do not wait for marriage till she is of age; they buy, at a nominal price, an elderly widow who is well pleased to be provided for once more. Later on the young girl becomes the leading wife.

Whenever a wealthy native adds a consort to his harem the other wives beat her, quarrel, scream, and fume. Every now and then they come to fisticuffs. Peace would be rather surprising. A young girl, fifth in the race, grew so dissatisfied with her new associates that she returned to her family time and again. At last her husband lost patience, killed and ate her.

Newborn babies are welcomed with smoke. Woman after woman holds the infant over a fire, whispering benedictions. Their well-wishing folly is rewarded by the father with shell-money. Sometimes it happens that the innocent little creature is choked to death by the smoke it inhales at the oft repeated blessings. Less than a month old it is fed on solid food previously chewed and mellowed by its

mother. It is carried, first in a cloth slung about woman's shoulder, later astride the hip.

All children, independent as soon as they are able to walk about, grow up wild, playing, rambling about the forest, strolling on the seashore, hunting, and returning home in the evening for their meal. Moral influence through exhortation, reward, or punishment is unknown. A father never strikes his progeny and the mother dares not: "Hard words bruise the heart of a child." For the slightest reason there is a runaway and a stay at loving uncle's. True emancipation!

Youths acquire technical knowledge through mere experience, not through lessons. Happily their gift of observation and grasp of intellect stand them in good stead. Soon the knowledge of their elders is theirs and their countenance betrays premature development.

Lawlessness is invariably the result of a free and uncontrolled youth. The pestilential air of vice they breathe and the infamous spectacles they witness prepare their minds and hearts for a sturdy career of savagery.

CHAPTER XVII

Warfare and Murder

THE various tribes are in a continuous state of hostility. Today one clan carries war into another's territory, tomorrow the vanquished raids the victor; today they are man-hunters, tomorrow they are hunted. Their longing for murder and cannibal repasts on the one hand and their distrust on the other allow them no peace. War is their second nature.

At the hour of danger the drum is sounded and the warriors gather around a person distinguished for his wealth or cruelty. The battle is fought either on the grass-covered plains which divide neighboring districts or in the thicket of the forest. It is the sorcerer's task to throw the first spear and to insure victory through witchcraft. All are guided by the motto, "Victory or flight, on no account sacrifice of life." For safety sake dear friends are

left in the lurch at the most critical stage of the battle.

Great harm is inflicted by ruse, treacherous attacks, and cunning invasions. Since very narrow paths lead through the high grass and the forest, one can not reconnoiter beyond a few yards. Deep gullies, caverns, and precipices offer safe ambuscades from which the unseen warrior may spear his enemy. Pits are dug and so carefully covered with twigs, soil, and decayed leaves that the keen eye of the natives fails to detect them. Whoever walks into them is doomed, as he drops with full weight onto the spears planted perpendicularly at the bottom.

Raids upon a neighboring tribe take place early in the morning when the enemy is drowsy and readily bewildered. Before a weapon can be seized he is slain with a brandished club. Rendered lion-hearted through the sight of blood the warriors kill men, women and children, and fell fruit-trees in the plantations. The bodies of the slain are carried home as trophies and are eaten.

Security is unknown. The law of vengeance

imperiously claims bloodshed: "Blood, though it sleep a time, yet never dies." The relatives of the murdered tribesmen are not allowed to rest till the murderers or their kindred are put to death. They roam the forest or lie in wait for the guilty or their kinsmen. At their appearance the name of the slain is called and the murder follows. Death again calls for retaliation and retaliation carries the state of war from generation to generation.

Ancient enmity still lingers in the hearts of the natives who can not seek revenge because of the pressure brought to bear by their foreign rulers. Even christian tribes hardly overcome this feeling and hate to gather in the same place of worship on Sundays. Two chieftains, who were deadly enemies, now visit and present each other with the customary betel, but each one, while accepting the present, throws it away for fear of poisoning.

Inborn savagery caused the tribes to turn their weapons against white settlers. Among their innocent victims was Mrs. Wolff, the wife of a wealthy planter.

On a fine morning some natives of Papara-

tava called on Mrs. Wolff, offering eggs for sale. The lady, seated on the staircase of the rear porch, was testing the eggs against the sun when a native struck her with an ax from behind. Her cries for help were drowned in the triumphant howls of the savages bounding out of the near-by forest. They dragged her from the steps and plunged eleven spears into her body. The young black nurse of her three-month baby stood aghast. The frail charge was snatched away, dashed to the ground, and hit against a boulder. She herself died from blows.

On the front porch sat a visiting half-breed girl. An old warrior rushed at her with an uplifted ax, but she succeeded in slipping from the veranda into the kitchen. The native cook bolted the door behind her. For a moment her persecutor stood in front of the door but left to share in looting the planter's home. When he returned after a while the cook shouted: "The police are coming, the police are coming!" This warning set the savages to flight. The girl took to the forest and reached the residence of the nearest missionary.

While the savages ransacked the planter's

home, taking rifles, shotguns, ammunition, and provisions, Mr. Wolff heard the wild war-whoops and instantly swung on horseback toward his station. There he beheld his wife and child weltering in blood. Frenzied with sorrow he intended to jump from the horse when two bullets passed near his head. Desperate, he drove up a steep hill. The horse stumbled and rolled over him. He disentangled himself and galloped toward the seat of government to summon help.

A Catholic missionary was at the station of Paparatava at the time of the murder and heard the war cry distinctly. Soon a chieftain, perspiring, stark-naked, and armed with two spears, appeared. He offered to escort him safely through the throng of warriors. The offer, looking too dangerous, was refused. The chieftain then volunteered to guide him through the forest to safety.

A punitive expedition was organized by the governor. The instigator and his relatives had fled to hostile tribes by whom all but the chieftain and his wife were slain in a deep ravine where the police saw the dismembered bodies

roasting over fires. For a time the chieftain and his wife roved over the mountains like hunted animals. They finally fell into the hands of the police and were shot at Paparatava.

CHAPTER XVIII

Slavery

UNTIL Christianity became a liberating factor slavery prevailed on the coast of the Gazelle peninsula and in Baining. At least once a year war was waged for the sole purpose of securing slaves.

Such a war occured in 1896. The inhabitants of the small islands off the Baining coast, in connivance with coastal tribes, invited the Baining natives to make peace forever. The mountaineers, rejoicing at the good news, came to the shore laden with pigs and taros. On the edge of the reef the slave-hunters kept their canoes in readiness. Some stepped ashore, chewed betel, spoke of peace, embraced their friends, held them in their arms in token of friendship, and showered them with trifles. They then asked their guests to place the return gifts aboard the waiting canoes. They did. Near the canoes the others plied them with flatteries, rubbing their hair with lime, painting

their chests, calling them brethren, and honoring them with new names.

"It is time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss." While the youths, up to the hips in water, were admiring the objects promised them in return for their pigs the men in the canoes suddenly reached out and dragged them aboard. The mountaineers, taken beyond their depth and unable to swim, were bound to follow their betrayers. In vain they cried for liberty. They were tied to the canoes and, if necessary, stunned with blows.

In the meantime the perfidious friends on the shore charged upon the remaining guests. The number of the slain, of whom the fattest bodies were taken home for repasts, amounted to fifty; the number of slaves to thirty.

On the islands of the slave-hunters heaps of taros were baked and stones were heated to roast the slain victims. Soon after the celebration a deputation sailed to the northern coast and spread the report of the spoils obtained. In a few days buyers came to inspect the human ware. It was high-priced, up to twenty-five dollars per head.

Invasions are made close to the coast. The slave-hunters crawl into the thicket and wait until the unsuspecting Baining people repair from the seashore to their homes. The hunters club elderly men and women and save all youths and children. If resistance necessitates the killing of a young man the assailant regrets not so much the death of the slain as the price he would have secured in the market.

The slave must surrender his tribal habits to embrace the customs of the slaveholder. So faithfully does he comply with his master's request that he soon acts like a coast native and forgets his own tongue. He lives, destitute of right, in the family of the master in whose estimation he is not a man, but a beast to be treated in a beastly manner. His owner may kill him for any or no reason; no one cares or utters a word of remonstrance. There is no escape from the dreadful expectation of being slain at some festival.

A slave rarely reaches old age. Labor and cruel treatment waste his strong constitution. In sickness he receives less care than a dog. He dies abandoned in a wretched hut or a

secluded place, unpitied and unmourned unless his master pass out shell-money to official mourners.

The slave's sad plight is supposed by the natives to continue even beyond the grave. His soul does not wander to the river Sambay in Nakaney to rejoice with the spirits of the wealthy deceased; it is doomed to roam about restless, molesting the living by begging, and bewailing its unfortunate condition. The dying slave leaves no fortune, and fortune alone, according to native belief, entitles to a blissful beyond. To escape annoyance from the penurious slave's soul the living place eatables in certain spots and believe that food mitigates the dead slave's state of grief and misery.

The Catholic mission checked the slave -traffic by the erection of stations on the northeastern seashore of the Gazelle peninsula and in the Baining district. Father Rascher, a famous linguist and ethnologist, settled many freed slaves near his residence, Saint Paul, erected homes for them, and assigned to each a tract of land for cultivation.

CHAPTER XIX

Cannibalism

OUR feelings shrink from the idea that man look at his own kind, from the viewpoint of a connoisseur, as a dainty and juicy roast. The report of savages slaying and devouring their own fellow-men sounds too incredible to be true. Yet even today cannibalism exists in New Britain and adjoining islands with the exception of those small territories which are under the direct influence of government and missions, Catholic and Wesleyan.

A fact and facts.

Dr. Hahl, for many years the enlightened and humane governor of New Britain and neighboring islands, writes: "On repeated expeditions in New Ireland, the islands situated to the west, and in New Hanover I had ample opportunity to observe the natives and gather information. Such was especially the case during my expedition against the inhabitants of the Madine dis-

A Bush Patriarch — Nauru

A Native Disfigured by Cannibals of
New Britain — Nauru

trict on the eastern coast of New Ireland, and against the chieftain, Timeam, on the north-eastern shore of the Mausoleum Island.

"Near the hut of the chieftain, Trenton, I was shown two trees covered with ax-made incisions. The natives described in unmistakable words how the victims were tied to the trees and deprived of arms and legs, these being roasted before the eyes of their former owners unless the poor fellows previously bled to death.

"In the battle against Madine many warriors fell. The tribes of the northern district, deadly enemies of the former, had aided me in blockading the coast with their canoes. The fight ended, I assembled my men. I then heard a gruesome howl of jubilation from my allies who but for their warlike attire were stark-naked. They had begun to gather the 'booty' and two men were carrying the slain chief of the hostile tribe, tied to a bamboo. Not knowing what they intended to do with the body I let them alone for a while. Meantime their shouts of joy increased. Another body was brought. The former had been put into a canoe. Then I was assured by

the police that a great festival would take place. It was plain for what purpose the canoes were laden. Of course the warriors obeyed my order to leave the bodies untouched. On the following day, however, I learned that they had eaten them, failing to understand why their long-practised customs should be abolished. As a matter of fact the corpses of slain enemies are carefully shaved, washed, covered with ornaments, and roasted on hot stones.

"A former police-soldier, who had returned to his own country, asked permission to take part in the expedition against Madine. As usual he distinguished himself through bravery. As a reward, I was told, he took two corpses. Henceforth he avoided me, most likely because of his guilty conscience.

"During the battle I saved a little girl who was running about weeping in fear of being killed. In the excitement of the fray a youth, who had spent years in the service of a white man, exclaimed: "Master, she is good eating, let me roast her!"

Father Rascher wrote: "In former times when neither missioners nor traders were

settled on the coast of Baining cannibalism was a common occurence in the lives of the natives. During their frequent excursions they were offered a welcome chance to obtain human flesh.

"Formerly the custom prevailed of slaying people at the least provocation. A chieftain about to lay out a new plantation, to build a hut or launch a canoe killed one or more slaves. The young men who spent several weeks of solitude in the forest before their marriage feast were fed on human flesh.

"On the Baining coast it was customary in every family to slay slaves in spring and fall to regale the appetite of their neighbors. Before public dances the natives of Baining were hunted to gratify those friends who abstained from pork, this abstinence being imposed on the members of the native secret society called 'iniet'."

At the first station erected by Father Rascher on the seashore of Baining, Bishop Couppé had the following conversation with a six-year-old boy:

"Did you ever eat human flesh?"

"Yes, three times."

"When did you eat it last?"

"Yesterday."

"Who gave it to you?"

"To-Lapapar."

"You lie, child. To-Lapapar left for the north to gather money shells."

"He came home last evening and brought two corpses along."

"Of what part of the body did you eat?"

"Of the thigh."

"Do you relish human flesh?"

"It is delicious."

"Is there any left?"

"There is; we shall have more today."

"I never saw roasted human flesh; would you fetch me a piece?"

"To be sure, if To-Lapapar give me some."

"All right, my boy; go and return promptly!"

The lad failed to appear at the station for three days, either because he was refused human flesh or was rebuked by the chieftain. Another boy confirmed the little fellow's assertion.

In one of the orphan homes at Vuna Pope

eighty out of a hundred children frankly admitted the fact of having eaten human flesh.

In 1902 two hundred natives sailed from the southeastern coast of New Britain to view the main settlement of the white men in Blanche Bay. They spent a week at the government and mission stations and started on their home journey. Having rounded the first cape they stepped ashore near a village inhabited by Wesleyan and Catholic natives. They were heartily welcomed by the converted villagers. Of a sudden they seized and killed twenty men. A Catholic boy escaped and ran at once to the bishop's residence to inform him of the massacre. The prelate sent word to the Governor General, who dispatched thirty black soldiers in a gasoline launch to punish the murderers. On landing near the village they beheld the savages grouped about fires and devouring their victims. Some of the two hundred cannibals were shot, others were captured, others fled into the forest. On this occasion roasted human flesh was brought to the seat of government to prove explicitly that cannibalism was an undeniable fact. Later the bishop visited the ter-

ritory of the visitors and learned that only two of the escaped men had reached their homes in safety, all others having been slain and eaten.

At a cannibal feast the corpse is cut, wrapped piecemeal in banana leaves, and roasted on red-hot stones. Each chieftain receives his share; the rest is distributed among, or sold to, the other families.

The most exquisite dainties are furnished by babes, even unborn ones, and by the heart of adults. Could there be a more refined savagery?

CHAPTER XX

A Tragic Massacre

IN HIS last letters Father Rascher complained of the cold, heartless, vacillating and ungrateful mountain tribes of Baining. Unaware of the secret undermining work done by various fomentors he plainly realized that a feeling of ill-will was gradually developing against him. Most of the parishioners had but recently renounced barbarism. Their savagery was kept alive by scenes of plunder and bloodshed, and their depraved instincts could easily be aroused by a skillful leader.

Such a leader was To-Maria, a former slave who had enjoyed years of benefits from the mission. Rebuked by Father Rascher for having divorced his wife and kidnaped another man's he resolved to insure heathen liberty once more. He roused the anger of neighboring tribes by stealing their hogs and the produce of their fields, pretending to act in the name of

the missioner. He also told the tribes that Father Rascher influenced the Governor General in building roads from village to village and lured settlers to the mountain region to rob the owners of their property.

Little by little rumors spread that a general uprising against all foreigners was planned by To-Maria and consorts. Father paid no attention to them and strove to complete his new church. The magnificent building was to be dedicated on August 26th, 1904. To prepare for the celebration three lay Brothers and seven Sisters were kept busy at the station, St. Paul.

On the morning of August 13th, a Saturday, the Brothers and Sisters spent an hour of prayer and meditation in the church and went to work. Two of the Sisters left for the seashore to bring up various articles sent hither from the central station. Father Rascher, suffering from malaria, rested on his bed.

To-Maria entered the bedroom to get Father's shotgun and shells to hunt wild pigeons, as was his custom every Saturday. Instead of heading for the woods, and full of the black purpose he had evolved, he ordered

a boy to open the priest's bedroom window and fired a full charge of small shot into his breast. The injured missioner rose, staggered to the dining-room, and dropped unconscious. A Sister, who was scrubbing the floor, screamed when she beheld blood trickle from the priest's chest. At the same moment To-Maria bounded into the house. The Sister took refuge in an adjoining room and bolted the door. With one blow the murderer smashed the door, entered, and fired at the Sister.

The first report of the gun was the signal for the other savages to attack the remaining members of the mission. Two Brothers had their head split with axes. The third one ran toward the school building and protected himself with a board. A laborer, in an endeavor to save the Brother's life, shielded him with his own body. To-Maria, nevertheless, wounded the Brother in the head and, through another charge, in the side. Four Sisters were slain either in their home or in the church. The only surviving one, having called on a sick woman in the village, was bandaging a girl near the priest's residence when she was struck with a

club. She revived. Her assailant trembled and was railed by To-Maria: "Hast thou not the courage to kill a woman?" Brutal and heartless, he himself plunged a long bushknife into her stomach and trampled the victim till life was extinct.

A few minutes sufficed to complete the massacre.

The two Sisters who left St. Paul early in the morning had hardly reached the seashore station when Catholic men and boys, breathless and exhausted, informed them of the happenings. The priest in charge of the station, regardless of his own endangered life, saddled his horse and galloped to the hills, encountering on his way weeping men and women. The village was deserted. He found Father Rascher's body in a pool of blood. Opening the rear door of the house he was sighted by the savages, who began to run towards him with uplifted axes and piercing cries. In his defenseless position he could but make for his horse and return swiftly to his station.

Before leaving the seashore he had hastily

jotted down a warning note to Father Rutten, whose residence was located farther in the mountains. It came too late. He was resting on a deck-chair and reading a book on the martyrs of the catacombs. A native fired through the canvas and split his skull. A throng of others jumped on the porch and crushed his head with stone axes.

The mountain tribes looted the station of St. Paul, taking whatever was deemed useful, such as clothing, canned food, knives, carpenter tools and ornaments, and scattering chalices, lamps, books, and school-plates. Three orphan boys were killed and eaten near the residence of the Sisters. The savages finally cleansed their bodies from blood and dust in a near-by spring.

As soon as possible a sailing boat was dispatched to the Governor General. In the afternoon some Catholics tried to secure the bodies of the slaughtered missioners and Sisters, but were prevented by heavy rains from carrying to the shore any other than Father Rascher's remains.

Towards evening the laborers of a plantation, armed with rifles, spears and clubs, gathered

at the seashore station and stood guard throughout the night. Before daybreak the mountaineers rushed out of the forest, but withdrew as soon as bullets and spears told them that the tenants of the residence were ready to meet attack. After sunrise Father Rascher's body was returned to earth at the entrance of the church. During the service the enemies repeated their onset, equally without success.

The dispatch to the government reached its destination early Sunday morning. Unfortunately the Governor had left for the Caroline Islands, his substitute was in New Guinea, and the judge had been called to the northern coast of New Britain. Thus the chief of police, the physician, a missionary, several settlers, and twenty native policemen took to a gasoline launch and landed off the coast of Baining at 6 P. M.

On Monday morning everybody, with the exception of some guards, marched to St. Paul. No living soul was to be seen. Instead their eyes beheld the most shocking spectacle. Eight corpses lay, untouched, in the position in which

they had fallen. One Brother clasped pencil and square; another held a trowel in his cold hand. Sister Superior rested near the altar-railing, surrounded by the battered tabernacle and scattered hosts.

The missioner ordered a large grave dug and recited the last prayers in a trembling voice, while policemen stood guard with loaded rifles at their feet.

A tour through the forest failed to reveal a single enemy. On Wednesday the officers and bluejackets of a surveying man-of-war raided and killed some of the murderers. To-Maria had intrenched himself near the foot of a mountain. The soldiers approached his stronghold and he fired twice. Reloading his rifle behind a tree he was hit in the throat by a shell fired by the chief of police. His head was brought to the seashore and planted upon a spear as a warning to evil-doers.

Seven months after the massacre Baining had another missioner who labored successfully and heroically, for heroism begets heroism.

While the sterile virgin forest is gradually

felled and replaced by useful plantations the souls of the cannibals are illumined with the rays of civilization, proving once again Christianity's power in leading barbarous tribes from savagery to the realm of culture.

THE END

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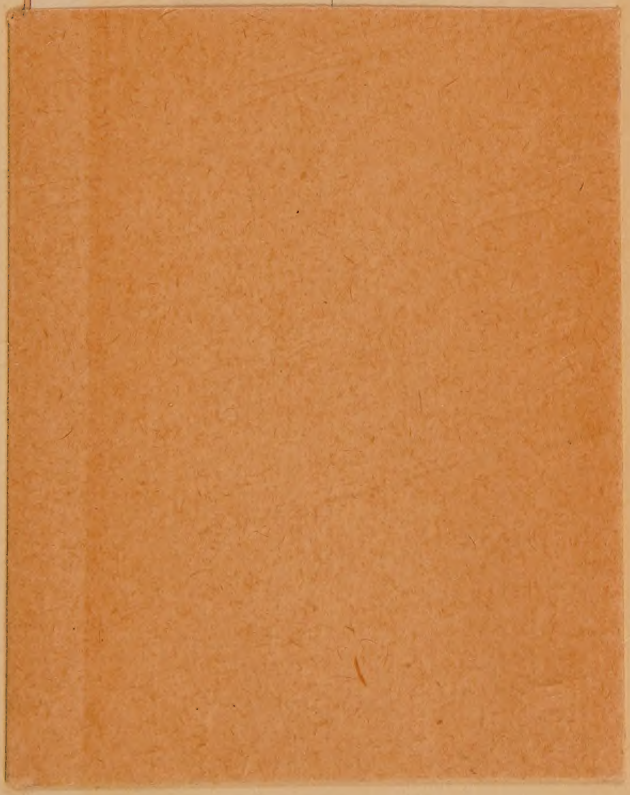
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